

CLAIMS

1. The use of ulvans, in particular extracted from green algae of the genus *Ulva* or *Enteromorpha*, or of ulvan-derived oligosaccharides, as elicitors of mechanisms for nitrogen absorption and protein synthesis.
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2. The use as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the abovementioned ulvans are extracted from algae chosen from the group consisting of the following species: *Ulva armoricana*, *Ulva rigida*, *Ulva rotundata*, *Ulva lactuca*, *Enteromorpha intestinalis* and *Enteromorpha compressa*.
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3. The use as claimed in claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the abovementioned extracts are obtained by means of a method generally comprising the following steps: washing, milling, extraction (solid-liquid separation) and, optionally, fractionation, concentration and dehydration.
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4. The use as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the abovementioned ulvan-derived oligosaccharides are obtained by acid hydrolysis or enzymatic hydrolysis.
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5. The use as claimed in one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that the ulvans or ulvan-derived oligosaccharides are given to the plants:
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 - either in liquid form via the leaves or in nutritive solutions for the roots in an amount of from 0.1 to 100 g per liter, and preferably of the order of 1 g per liter,
 - or in solid form, for example, in pulverulent or granulated products in an amount of 10 to 1000 g, and preferably of the order of 25 200 g per hectare.
6. A method for improving the nitrogen absorption and protein synthesis of plants, characterized in that it comprises the application, to said plants or soils, of an effective amount of ulvans, in particular extracted from green algae of the genus *Ulva* or *Enteromorpha*, or of ulvan-derived oligosaccharides.
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7. The method as claimed in claim 6, characterized in that the application to the plants is carried out via the leaves or via the roots.
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8. The method as claimed in claim 6 or 7, characterized in that the abovementioned ulvans or ulvan-derived oligosaccharides are used in an amount of:
 - from 0.1 g to 100 g per liter, and preferably of the order of 1 g

per liter, when applied in liquid form via the leaves or in nutritive solutions for the roots,

- from 10 to 1000 g, and preferably of the order of 200 g per hectare, when applied in solid form, for example, in pulverulent or granulated fertilizers.

9. A fertilizing product, characterized in that it comprises an effective amount of at least one ulvan, in particular extracted from green algae of the genus *Ulva* or *Enteromorpha*, or an ulvan-derived oligosaccharide, optionally in combination with one or more fertilizing substances.

10. The fertilizing product as claimed in claim 9, characterized in that it is:

15 - either in the form of a liquid and in that it contains an amount of ulvans or of ulvan-derived oligosaccharides of from 0.1 g to 100 g per liter;

- or in the form of a solid, in particular in the form of a powder or granules and in that it contains an amount of ulvans or of ulvan-derived oligosaccharides which makes it possible to apply from 10 to 1000 g, and preferably of the order of 200 g per hectare.